

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 ICA-11 /082 W
-----037423 250028Z /14

R 241350Z JUL 78
FM AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7544
INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CAPE TOWN 1322

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SOCI, SHUM, PINS, PINT, SF
SUBJECT: WOODSTICK, WHITE CAPE TOWN SUBURB, MAY BE PROCLAIMED
COLORED AREA

1. HUNDREDS OF WHITE RESIDENTS OF WOODSTOCK AND SEVERAL OTHER AREAS ADJACENT TO DOWNTOWN CAPE TOWN MAY SOON BE FORCED OUT OF THEIR HOMES UNDER THE GROUP AREAS ACT. THIS FACT CAME TO LIGHT LAST WEEK WHEN THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING PUBLISHED SMALL LEGAL NOTICES IN TWO CAPE NEWSPAPERS INVITING COMMENT ON PROPOSALS TO 1) REDESIGNATE A PRESENTLY WHITE AREA AS A COLORED AREA, 2) DESIGNATE A PRESENTLY "UNPROCLAIMED" (RACIALLY UNRESTRICTED) AREA AS COLORED AND 3) MAKE ANOTHER WHITE AREA, LARGELY INDUSTRIAL, UNPROCLAIMED. THE NOTICES WERE NOT ONLY COMPLEX, THEY WERE OBSCURE; AREAS CONCERNED WERE NOT IDENTIFIED BY NAME, BUT MERELY REFERRED TO AS SECTION NUMBERS OF A MAP AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION AT CITY HALL.

2. THE PROPOSED CHANGES IN RACIAL DESIGNATION OF
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WOODSTOCK-SALT RIVER AREA WOULD, IF IMPLEMENTED, CAUSE CONSIDERABLE UPHEAVAL AND DESTROY ONE OF THE FEW REMAINING MIXED-RACE COMMUNITIES IN CAPE TOWN. MOST OF THE AREA'S WHITE RESIDENTS ARE POOR; MANY ARE RETIRED PENSIONERS, AND WOULD HAVE TROUBLE FINDING DECENT NEW ACCOMMODATIONS THEY COULD AFFORD (EXISTING RENTS ARE LOW DUE TO RENT CONTROL). MANY POOR COLORED FAMILIES

WOULD ALSO BE FORCED TO MOVE, SINCE WHITE LANDLORDS WOULD BE REQUIRED TO SELL THEIR HOMES TO COLOREDS, AND FEW OF THE EXISTING COLORED TENANTS COULD AFFORD TO BUY.

3. MANY FAMILIES WOULD ALSO BE TORN APART. WOODSTOCK IS HOME TO MANY "BORDERLINE" FAMILIES, EMBRACING MEMBERS BOTH CLASSIFIED AS WHITE AND NON-WHITE. THESE FAMILIES WOULD FIND IT VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO LIVE TOGETHER AS A UNIT IN ANY OTHER AREA OF THE CITY.

4. THE PROPOSED GROUP AREA CHANGES HAVE BEEN CONDEMNED BY MPS, CITY COUNCILLORS, MAYOR MAUERBERGER, AND, OF COURSE, BY SHOCKED AND ANGRY WOODSTOCK RESIDENTS, NONE OF WHOM WERE CONSULTED BEFOREHAND. COLORED COMMUNITY, WITH TYPICAL EXCEPTION OF FREEDOM PARTY LEADER BEGINS WHO ANNOUNCED IN FAVOR OF REPROCLAIMATIONS, HAS BEEN SILENT ON WOODSTOCK QUESTION.

5. PROPOSED REMOVAL OF WHITES IS DEEMED HIGHLY UNUSUAL, SINCE ALL BUT A FEW THOUSAND OF THE SEVERAL MILLION PEOPLE FORCED TO MOVE TO DATE BY GROUP AREAS ACT HAVE BEEN NON-WHITES. DEPUTY PLANNING MINISTER JANSON (ARGUS JULY 20) STATED THAT ALL RACES MUST MAKE SACRIFICES TO ENSURE ORDERLY DEVELOPMENT IN THE COMMUNITY, AND THAT PROPOSED WOODSTOCK CHANGES HAVE ARISEN FROM RECOMMENDATION BY THE ERIKA THERON COMMISSION THAT A LIVING AREA CLOSE TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE CITY BE PROVIDED TO COLORED PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN REMOVED FROM DISTRICT SIX (COMMENT: IN POINT OF FACT, THE THERON COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION WAS THAT DISTRICT SIX, WOODSTOCK, AND SALT RIVER ALL BE DECLARED COLORED AREAS).
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LAW, RACIAL DISCRIMINATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978CAPET01322
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780304-0098
Format: TEL
From: CAPE TOWN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780729/aaaaaxzo.tel
Line Count: 99
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: df42f96d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1912242
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: WOODSTICK, WHITE CAPE TOWN SUBURB, MAY BE PROCLAIMED COLORED AREA
TAGS: SOCI, SHUM, PINS, PINT, SF
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/df42f96d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014